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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the procedures to be undertaken in a dialect survey of Arkansas. General objectives of the survey are outlined. Statistics concerning residency, education, family income, and ethnic background will be considered in the survey. Three classes of Caucasian speakers of English have been designated for interviewing. Planning for the survey is based on a subdivision of the state in nine geographical zones. A bibliography is included. (RL)

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THE RESEARCH METHODS OF THE ARKANSAS LANGUAGE SURVEY

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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On October 30, 1970, less than two months after I had joined the faculty at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, I read a paper before the English VI: General Linguistics section of the South Central Modern Language Association meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, entitled Problems in the study of Arkansas dialects.[1] In that paper I set forth the motives for undertaking the study of dialects in Arkansas, sketched the long-range goals for needed studies, and described the plans for the projected initial statewide dialect survey.

Proposed at that time was a wide-meshed survey which would be similar to traditional linguistic atlas projects but which would be distinguished from earlier regional studies by numerous significant changes in methodology. Originally this survey was conceived as a preliminary investigation in communities spread throughout Arkansas. The state had been segmented into 35 areas, based roughly upon a 35 mile grid. Within each area we planned to interview native speakers from the rural communities and small towns with the population character of the area generally reflected in the choice of speakers and communities. Such selection would reflect the general social characteristics of the state.

In addition to statistics about residency, occupations, and education, data on family income and the ethnic composition of the population were other considerations. These social characteristics were to be generally reflected in the selection of our speakers. Within each zone we planned to interview white native speakers representing three social classes:

1. Lower Class: Grade school education or less; laborers, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, unemployed, welfare recipiants, etc.; struggling existence.
2. Working Class: Perhaps some high school; blue collar workers, small farmers; more comfortable living conditions.
3. Lower Middle Class: High school graduates; small businessmen, craftsmen, white collar workers, semi-professionals, medium-sized farmers; pillars of the community, children in college, luxuries.

In some instances Upper Middle Class people were to be interviewed. In those parts of the state with blacks in significant proportions (generally in eastern and southern Arkansas), interviews were anticipated with at least two black native speakers--one each from the Lower Class and the Working Class. In a black community with a clearly-defined Middle Class, a speaker from this group would also be interviewed. We expected to have approximately 105 white and 48 black speakers.

In the 1970-71 academic year we engaged in preliminary fieldwork to initiate potential fieldworkers to the challenge of

interviewing in field situations and to pre-test various versions of the format and content of the questionnaire. A total of 18 pilot interviews were completed, 11 being done by graduate students enrolled in English 6113, a seminar in American English dialectology, offered at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the spring semester, 1971. The majority of the speakers interviewed were residents of northwest Arkansas, but two interviews were conducted in the west-central part of the state, three in the Texarkana area in the southwest, and one in eastern Arkansas. During the 1971-72 academic year we studied the tape recordings of the pilot interviews for the purpose of making adjustments in our methodology that seemed to be warranted. It was apparent that a number of the direct questions for elicited responses must be revised in order to gain satisfactory responses, and we learned a great deal about strategies to employ in the conversational part of the interview. The pilot interviews also revealed that many of the traditional lexical items in the worksheets for American linguistic atlas research are simply unproductive for Arkansas speakers of this day. But as we dropped items from our questionnaire, we added new ones that were brought to our attention in the pilot interviews. A revised version of the Arkansas questionnaire was prepared for another testing in 1972 in order that the state-wide investigation can begin in earnest in August, 1972.

Since October, 1970, when the plans for a preliminary state survey were first proposed, our research design has been considerably modified, the motivation having come from several sources. The desirability of beginning the study of Arkansas

dialects by interviewing in 35 communities as one would for a linguistic atlas has been re-considered in light of data from three sources: from tape recordings of Arkansans interviewed for the DARE (Dictionary of American regional English) project made available to us by Professor Frederic Cassidy of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, from the pilot interviews conducted in 1970-71, and from published observations on Arkansas dialects. Examination of these data suggests that Arkansas English is much more uniform than previously assumed. It appears that while there may be numerous localized differences in vocabulary and incidental pronunciations, these are of minor importance in true dialect differentiation. Indeed, it can be argued that neither vocabulary items nor incidental pronunciations are integral features of a dialect and, therefore, are not dialect differentiators. This point is made by both Stewart (1969:200) and Kochman (1969: 92). Systematic differences (differences in the ordered generative and transformational rules constituting native speaker competence) in syntax and phonology appear to be few. Secondly, it was thought that the state-wide survey ought to incorporate wherever possible the innovations and improvements in methodology and theory provided by investigators of urban dialects, such as Labov (1966) and Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley (1968). Also, the arguments set forth by critics of American linguistic geography, e.g., Pickford (1957), Bailey (1968), and Dillard (1969a and 1969b), have been given serious consideration. As a result, an alternative research design for the survey was drawn up in consultation with sociologists at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

Revised plans call for beginning the first coherent statewide survey of Arkansas dialects, which has been titled the Arkansas Language Survey, in 1972. The general aims of this study are:

1. To test the hypothesis that Arkansas is divided linguistically into a mountain dialect area and a lowland dialect area (i.e., South Midland and Southern areas, respectively), and to determine the feasibility of a detailed regional study to sharply define the geographic boundary if it exists.
2. To gain insight into the processes of obsolescence and replacement in the syntactic and phonological systems (and possibly the lexicon) of three generations of native speakers of Arkansas English.
3. To determine the linguistic correlates of social stratification of Arkansas English, specifically to test two hypotheses: (A) that dialect differentiation in Arkansas is the product of group identification and affiliation, not geography, and (B) that there exists in Arkansas a distinct variety of English which may be identified as Black English.
4. To determine the importance of style shifting as an explanation of linguistic variation in Arkansas.
5. To test hypotheses concerning the linguistic insecurity and negative self-evaluation of Arkansas speakers.
6. To provide a body of information about Arkansas English which can be utilized as background knowledge for later

intensive studies in the urban centers and relic areas of the state.

7. To provide accurate and relevant linguistic data upon which pedagogical applications can be based for upgrading instruction in language arts in Arkansas schools.

The original plan to investigate 35 communities has been abandoned because it was recognized that simply not enough is known about the population of the state to warrant such an undertaking. A beginning study of language differentiation in Arkansas is handicapped by the fact that there are virtually no sociological studies of the state to build upon. Lacking reliable useful data about the population of Arkansas (which a social geography would supply) to aid the linguistic researcher, a language survey done at this time must be in large part sociological as well as linguistic. One of its goals must be to draw a sample that will provide a cross-section of native-born Arkansans, one that will provide both social and geographic distribution of participants.

A random sample of the entire state population may be the ideal sample for some sociological studies, but it is not feasible for the Arkansas Language Survey. Even if it were practical to obtain such a sample, this survey seeks to study the language of native speakers, not that of the total population as some sociolinguistic investigations would attempt. In fact, it is assumed that a more inclusive sociolinguistic study would be a desirable follow-up to the one presently undertaken. Since a geographic distribution of native speakers is necessary in order to test an important hypothesis of this survey, the first step in the

sampling procedure was to divide the state into geographic-cultural regions.

A fundamental division of the state runs closely parallel to U. S. highway 67, extending from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the state and separating the mountain or highlands region, which covers about 48% of the state, from the lowlands that constitute 52% of Arkansas. Both of these macro-areas have natural subdivisions. The mountain portion consists of the Ozark Mountains in the northern part of the state, the Ouachita Mountains in the southwest, and the Arkansas River Valley separating the two.

The Ozark Mountains is a region of forested, eroded table-land rising to heights of 2,000 feet and deep gorges with depths varying from 500 to 1,200 feet. In many areas the country is quite rough, unsuited for agriculture, and sparsely inhabited. In other areas are gently undulating tablelands called "prairies" locally; the significant ones, found in Boone, Benton, and Washington counties, are good farming areas. Here are dairy and beef cattle herds and apple and peach orchards. Throughout the Ozarks the broiler chicken and turkey industry is a vital source of income. In addition to poultry processing, manufactoring plants are located in almost every sizable town. Tourism is also a major source of income. Although the Ozarks could be assumed to be a uniform cultural area, because of its size, it was decided to divide it into eastern and western zones.

The Ouachita Mountains is a region of East-to-West ridges with sharp faults and valleys with elevations ranging from 400

to over 1,000 feet. About three-fourths of the region is forested. Bauxite, barite, and novaculture are mined in the northern part of the mountains and the southern region is an area of livestock and poultry farming. Hot Springs National Park and several lakes promote tourism.

Between the two mountain areas lies the Arkansas River Valley, bottomland broken by long ridges and mesa-like mountains such as Sugarloaf, Petit Jean, Poteau, Nebo, White Oak, and Magazine. Cotton, soybeans, and corn have been important crops throughout the valley though emphasis has shifted to beef and dairy cattle, general and truck farming, and orchards. Coal deposits and natural gas fields are located in the western part of the valley, and small industries are all through the region. The recent development of the Kerr-McClellan waterway is responsible for new economic growth along the Arkansas River.

The lowland area is even more complicated than the typography suggests. Geographically and geologically the lowlands are divided into two regions, the Mississippi Alluvial Plain and the West Gulf Coastal Plain. The former is an area of rich productive farmland extending along the western bank of the Mississippi River from Missouri to Louisiana. Marked by intricate systems of levees, drainage ditches, and rechanneled rivers, this portion of the state is predominantly an agricultural area of cotton, rice, soybeans, hay, cattle, and catfish farming. This sprawling region is divided for this study into three sections. The southeast is an area known locally as the Delta, north of which is a region labeled East Arkansas. The essential difference between the Delta

and East Arkansas is the influence of Memphis upon the latter, an influence lacking in the Delta. Finally, Northeast Arkansas is separated from East Arkansas because, although the agricultural base is essentially identical with that of the rest of the lowlands, the population of Northeast Arkansas is overwhelmingly white whereas the rest of the lowlands have high black populations (ranging from 20% to over 60% of the total in these counties).

The West Gulf Coastal Plain is divided into two regions. To the west of the Delta is the Southern Timberlands, the best timber region in Arkansas. The important trees are shortleaf and loblolly pines which are cut for pulpwood and paper. Once guilty of indiscriminate cutting, the timber industry now practices fire protection, selective cutting, and reforestation. In southwest Arkansas lies the Red River Bottomlands, once an area of some of the best cotton land in Arkansas. Today less cotton is raised with more emphasis upon beef cattle and dairy herds. Hempstead County is also noted for its peaches and watermelons. Both the Red River Bottomlands and the Southern Timberlands contain oil fields in Union, Ouachita, Columbia, Lafayette, Nevada, and Miller counties.

Thus, for this survey, the state has been divided into the following nine cultural areas (see also Figure 2):

1. The Western Ozarks
2. The Eastern Ozarks
3. Northeast Arkansas
4. The Arkansas River Valley
5. East Arkansas

6. The Ouachita Mountains
7. The Red River Bottomlands
8. The Southern Timberlands
9. The Delta

From the 1970 census data certain population characteristics of each region have been determined.[2] These include (1) per capita income, (2) percentage of urban population, (3) percentage of non-white population, and (4) the average number of inhabitants per county. For each region a sample county was selected by choosing the county in each region having population characteristics that most closely matched those of the region as a whole. In this manner, the following counties were selected for the survey:

1. WESTERN OZARKS: Carroll County

   Population: 12,301

   Rural population: 100%

   Per capita income: $1,666

   Racial composition: 12,255 whites; 22 blacks; 24 other

   Carroll County is mountaneous (1,200 to 2,100 feet), lying in the heart of the Ozarks. There are over 600 springs in the county, and the town of Eureka Springs is one of the older tourist centers of Arkansas, dating back to the 1880's. Water is bottled in Eureka Springs and shipped to other parts of the U. S. for sale. Industries in the towns of Berryville and Green Forest include cheese and poultry processing and garment manufactoring.

2. EASTERN OZARKS: Cleburne County

   Population: 10,349

Rural population: 100%

Per capita income: $1,754

Racial composition: 10,318 whites; 18 blacks; 13 other

Cleburne County is rolling hill country. Seven springs have made Heber Springs a popular watering place since about 1850. The creation of Greers Ferry Lake (40,500 acres) by damming the Little Red and Middle Fork rivers has stimulated resort development in recent years.

3. NORTHEAST ARKANSAS: Clay County

Population: 18,771

Rural population: 68%

Per capita income: $1,802

Racial composition: 18,742 whites; 4 blacks; 25 other

Clay County is bottomland bisected by Crowley's Ridge, running from North to South and rising to 500 feet. The county is a rich farming area for rice, corn, cotton, soybeans, and sorghum. Poultry and cattle are also raised, particularly along Crowley's Ridge. Some commercial fishing is carried on on four rivers, and catfish farming is practiced in the eastern part of the county. Shoes and lingerie are manufactored in Corning and Piggott.

4. ARKANSAS RIVER VALLEY: Logan County

Population: 16,789

Rural population: 59%

Per capita income: $1,578

Racial composition: 16,455 whites; 295 blacks; 39 other

Mt. Magazine (2,823 feet), the highest mountain between the Alleghenies and the Rockies, divides the county into two farming

areas, the Arkansas River Valley to the North and the Petit Jean Valley to the South. Although many farms still have cotton allotments, cotton farming has waned with farmers turning to cattle, general and truck farming. Several small factories are located in Booneville and Paris. Natural gas and bituminous coal are found in the county.

5. EAST ARKANSAS: St. Francis County

Population: 30,790

Rural population: 59%

Per capita income: $1,679

Racial composition: 16,092 whites; 14,547 blacks; 160 other

The agriculturally-dependent economy has cotton as the basic crop, but there is increased diversification with corn, rice, soybeans, and cattle. Like Clay County, St. Francis County has its bottomlands interrupted by Crowley's Ridge, an area of orchards and cattle raising. There is diversified industry in Forrest City.

6. OUACHITA MOUNTAINS: Hot Spring County

Population: 21,963

Rural population: 63%

Per capita income: $1,986

Racial composition: 19,089 whites; 2,826 blacks; 48 other

Lakes Catherine and Hamilton are sources of tourist revenues, but tourism is overshadowed by industry. The Magnet Cove area produces 80% of all barite in the United States, and in Malvern are located brick, barite, and aluminum factories. Most of the county is forested, and timber cutting is extensive.

7. RED RIVER BOTTOMLANDS: Hempstead County

Population: 19,308

Rural population: 51%

Per capita income: $1,695

Racial composition: 12,862 whites; 6,393 blacks; 53 other

Settlement of the Hempstead County area began in 1812, and the county was an important gathering point for Sam Houston and others during the time of Anglo migration into Texas. During the Civil War the provisional capital of Arkansas was located here in Washington. An agricultural area where cotton was once the dominant crop, Hempstead County is famous for its watermelons. It is also an area of peach orchards and is the largest beef cattle producing county in Arkansas. Hope has diversified small industries.

8. SOUTHERN TIMBERLANDS: Bradley County

Population: 12,778

Rural population: 50%

Per capita income: $1,759

Racial composition: 8,751 whites; 4,018 blacks; 9 other

Northeast Bradley County is noted for the pink tomatoes grown there, but most of the county is forested. Several plants in Warren turn out pine and hardwood products.

9. DELTA: Desha County

Population: 18,761

Rural population: 51%

Per capita income: $1,737

Racial composition: 10,557 whites; 8,178 blacks; 26 other

Cotton is still the dominant crop in Desha County, but soybean and catfish farming are increasing in importance. Catfish processing plants are located in both Dumas and McGehee. The vast swampy area along the Mississippi River provides excellent deer hunting and fishing.

Since a random sample of the population of an entire region may be ideal but unfeasible, the use of representative counties is an acceptable alternative. This method is based upon the assumption that if the regional boundaries are valid, then representative counties (microcosms of the macrocosmic regions) ought to display the characteristics of their respective regions.

The selection of speakers within the designated counties still posed a sampling problem. Although original plans called for judgment samples, which are traditionally used in linguistic atlas projects, it was decided that this procedure was untenable, and a viable alternative was sought. Since a random sample of the total population of each chosen county was unfeasible, upon the recommendation of consultants for sampling methodology, the Arkansas Language Survey utilizes a sampling procedure that is a modification of the one used in the Detroit Dialect Study (Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley 1968:5-8). In order to insure three generations of speakers in the study, it was decided to draw the sample initially from school rosters and to interview the selected school children, their parents, and older relatives. Although this decision biases the sample against a portion of the adult population, this limitation is offset by the advantages of the method.

For each target county, elementary school children and their families for the survey were selected in the following manner. For each county to be studied the total was obtained of all children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in the schools of that county, and 24 children were chosen at random.[3] This selection was made by totaling the number of students in these three grades in each county and dividing that total by 24 to obtain n. Then, each nth name was taken from the alphabetical school roster. From this list of 24 children, ultimately four children and two older members of each of their families will be interviewed.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth grades are used for the sample for two fundamental reasons. First, because of compulsory education laws in Arkansas, elementary school rosters provide virtually the total population of this generation in the target county. Second, these upper elementary grades are populated by children typically between the ages of 10 and 13. According to contemporary language acquisition theory, children at this age are past the developmental stages of internalizing the rules of their native dialect. Being near the end of what Lenneberg (1968:378) calls their period of "resonance," these children possess essentially adult grammars of their language that they, presumably, will not alter significantly in later years. However, based upon the findings of Labov (1964:88-89), it is assumed that these children will be generally unaware of the social significance of linguistic differentiation. In other words, they ought to possess the rules (or what Labov [1970:

29-30] would call "Type I rules") of their linguistic community but not the subjective norms of that community.

When fieldwork begins, from each list of 24 families for the communities to be investigated, four will be selected for interviewing. The procedure will be to approach each sixth family on the list to obtain interviews. If the family is unavailable for interviewing or if it is not one native to the region, the next family on the list will be selected. This process will continue until four families are interviewed. In addition to interviewing the child, workers will interview one parent and one of the child's relatives who is past the age of 50.

Having revised the sampling methodology for the Arkansas Language Survey, we were still confronted with the problem of how to determine the social stratification of the sample. Three methods were considered; these are the procedures outlined in the following works: Warner, Social class in America (used by Pederson [1965] in his study of Chicago English), Michael, The construction of the social class index (used by Labov in his New York study), and Hollingshead, Social class and mental illness (used by the Detroit Dialect Survey). In addition, we took into consideration the question raised by Macauley in his review of Wolfram (1969) about objective criteria for social classification (1970:767-768). Upon the recommendation of sociologists who were consulted about research design, it was decided to retain the subjective classification of speakers described earlier in this paper. Whereas earlier plans called for restricting interviews to native speakers from Lower, Working, and Lower Middle

Class families, the current sampling procedure is non-restrictive. Families will be interviewed without regard to social class. In addition to the social classes described previously, the following designations will be used if families having these characteristics are chosen by the sampling procedure:

4. Upper Middle Class: College graduates; professionals, managers or owners of medium-size businesses; large farmers or ranchers; people with high incomes and considerable social status in their communities.
5. Upper Class: Graduates of prestigous universities; high-level officers, managers, or owners of large businesses; the social elite.

Just as we have changed our procedures for selecting those to be studied, we have also altered the format and content of the interview from its initial state. For the sake of brevity, the reasons for departure from the traditional dialect/questionnaire will not be enumerated here. Most of these motivations are spelled out, for example, in the writings of Pickford (1956), Labov (1966), Stewart (1969), and Dillard (1969a and 1969b). Briefly, our goals were to design an efficient, productive questionnaire to be completed in a maximum of two hours. This questionnaire, the theoretical model of which is transformational grammar, is divided into four large sections. These sections are their alloted times are as follows:

I. Conversation	30 minutes
II. Elicited responses	40 minutes

III. Reading 15 minutes

IV. Subjective responses 25 minutes

The interview begins with a non-directive or conversational period designed to provide the context for casual pronunciations and syntax as well as a few lexical items. The interviewer is guided by suggested questions related to school experiences, leisure activities, holidays and special events, everyday life, and the region. Many of our questions are patterned after those of Labov and Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley. We have two sets of questions for many subjects--one for children and another for adults. Furthermore, we have added questions intended to provoke "excited" responses, during which the speaker will become too involved to pay attention to "correct" speech.

After the conversational segment enables the interviewer to establish rapport with the speaker, the interview then shifts to the directive segment. In early versions of the questionnaire we attempted to limit this section exclusively to specific questions designed to elicit the speaker's careful pronunciation. This procedure was greatly modified when pilot interviews showed two serious libalities. First, it is virtually impossible to frame a uniform set of questions that will yield desired responses from all the kinds of Arkansans we will interview--the young as well as the old, educated as well as uneducated, black as well as white, poor as well as affluent, and rural as well as urban. Second, we discovered that on the average our tapes contained ten words of interviewer talk for every single-word response by the speaker. Consequently, the decision was to employ direct

questions or fill-the-blank sentences only as last resorts. In its present form our directive segment utilizes a variety of techniques, but it relies most heavily upon india ink sketches. Speakers are shown these and are asked to name items illustrated. Of the 40 minutes for elicited responses 25 minutes are alloted to the illustrations. The interview manual contains about 150 sketches on 29 pages. With these pictures we elicit 314 words having 437 pronunciation features of interest. Other techniques are used only when this approach is not viable. A second device is the use of simple antonyms. The interviewer says one word and has the speaker to respond with its antonym. With this strategy we elicit rapidly 31 words with 37 features of pronunciation of interest. Next we turn to 56 conventional direct questions with 73 pronunciation features in the responses and then conclude with a series of recitations--counting, saying the alphabet, naming the days of the week and the months, and reciting ordinal numbers. These recitations yield 82 words and 87 features.

The third portion of the interview, reading, is optional, to be omitted if the speaker cannot read or if the task would jeopardize the continued success of the interview. If the speaker is overly embarrassed by his limited reading ability or if he objects strongly, for whatever reason, the section is disregarded. A standard passage followed by 50 word pairs provide us with two reading styles. In early pilot interviews two familiar passages, Grip the rat and My eccentric grandfather

were tested. Because of repeated occurrences of negative reactions to these passages by our readers, we abandoned them in favor of a passage that would, while being of equal or superior productiveness, be more meaningful and less contrived. Our passage, entitled Life on an Arkansas farm, is a recollection narrated in the first person, and it is one almost any Arkansas native can identify with. If our youngsters have not experienced the life style depicted by the passage, they are certain to have heard similar accounts from older relatives. This passage contains virtually all the systematic pronunciations included in the elicited responses plus numerous incidental ones.

The fourth section, the attitudinal investigation, has four parts. First, the remaining few minutes of our recording time are devoted to questions concerning speakers' attitudes toward Arkansas speech. The last three sections resemble objective tests, for we ask the speaker to record his reactions to recordings which are played for him. First, he is asked to identify what he considers to be the correct pronunciations from differing pronunciations of a list of words. Next, we ask for self-identification to test the speaker's ability to identify his pronunciation among variant pronunciations of words in a list. Finally, he records subjective reactions on a semantic differential scale to recordings of ten speakers--7 outsiders illustrating various regional standards and 3 Arkansans.

The time limit for the questionnaire was dictated by two considerations. First, the length of the traditional linguistic atlas questionnaire is a handicap. When using a modified version

of the worksheets for the Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest in my research of the dialect of the Mesabi Iron Range in Minnesota, I found that my interviews required a minimum of seven hours and sometimes as many as 14 to elicit approximately 700 responses. Not only is it often difficult to persuade people to spend so much of their time with an interviewer, but occasionally people decide to discontinue the interview after a session or two. Thus it was our goal to develop an interview manual that can be completed in one session of approximately two hours. Secondly, bugetary limits restricted our selection of recording equipment to tape recorders using 5" reels of 900 feet, one mil. tape. We have purchased Sony TC 800B recorders that can be operated on either a. c. or battery power. These machines have an excellent frequency response (30 to 13,000 c. p. s.) at 3 3/4 i. p. s., a speed that yields 90 minutes of recording time. The interview is designed so that the first three sections and the first part of the fourth one can be recorded. Responses to the remainder of the subjective reaction tests are marked on printed forms. There is no advantage to recording on tape speakers' oral responses to these questions.

Clearly, the abbreviated length of the interview restricts the amount of speech data we can collect, and items retained for investigation had to be justified by a rigid set of priorities. Since the theoretical model of the study defines a dialect as a system of ordered generative and transformational rules, then if an item is not an integral aspect of the system, it was deleted. Consequently, vocabulary items were the first to go. As Kochman

and Stewart have correctly stressed, even though word usages may be distributed regionally, socially, occupationally, sexually, or ethnically, vocabulary items are not intrinsic features of any dialect or system. They can be used or not used by any speaker without affecting that person's system (Kochman 1969:92; Stewart 1969:200). Another reason for giving vocabulary a low priority is that considerable vocabulary investigation has already been conducted in Arkansas. Atwood's students interviewed 33 white native speakers in 20 southern Arkansas communities (Atwood 1962:34), Wood's vocabulary survey of the South includes data from white, native-born speakers in 35 Arkansas counties (Wood 1971:9 and map 3), and Cassidy's DARE workers have completed 13 lexical interviews in the state (Cassidy 1967:Table 1). In view of the attention already given to the lexicon and the neglect of other features, it seemed reasonable to direct our attention to unstudied aspects of Arkansas English and to delete lexical items from the present survey.

Similarly, most morphological items have not been retained. Again, the verb forms and plurals, etc., usually sought in dialect studies are those unsystematic or irregular choices for which analyses are forced to collect in lists rather than to account for in generalizations. Only those morphological items for which inflections are phonologically predictable (e.g., bimorphemic consonant clusters) have been retained. For syntactic data we are relying entirely upon conversational portions of the interview. While there are no specific questions designed to elicit these items, interviewers are provided with a list of features they

should try to record (i.e., double negatives, embedded questions, for...to complement constructions, agreement, possessives, reflexive pronouns, pronoun case, verb aspect, zero relatives, emphatic done, etc.) Obviously, the bulk of the interview is phonological, and the questionnaire includes all vowel and consonant pronunciations which potentially have variation predictable upon phonetic environment. Incidental pronunciations are sought in just one context, the standard reading passage.

Interviewing for the Arkansas Language Survey will begin in August. Four interviewers (Marie Joseph, Sue Roach, Linda Stafstrom, and Melinda Word) are currently enrolled in English 416V, Field Study: Dialects, at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. These students have all had basic courses in English linguistics (i.e., the history and structure of English); two have had additional training in folklore, and one has a fairly extensive language background, including courses in American English and Afro-American English. The two other interviewers for the survey are myself and Professor Bethany K. Dumas of Southern University who is the Associate Director of the Arkansas Language Survey. The students are now reading materials selected to familiarize them with the theory and methodology of dialectology. Upon my return to Fayetteville we will continue the intensive instructional period. After the interviewers are acquainted with the goals of the Arkansas Language Survey and its research design, instruction in interview techniques will follow. Finally, the students will conduct practice interviews for critical evaluation prior to

embarking on actual interviewing for the survey. During the period of individual interviewing, students will be assigned to the pre-determined counties for work; they will work in Carroll and Logan counties. The students, Ms. Dumas, and I intend to complete the 24 interviews scheduled for these counties during the summer. Remaining interviews will be conducted during the 1972-73 academic year primarily by Ms. Dumas, the principal interviewer of the Arkansas Language Survey who has been awarded a fellowship by the National Endowment for the Humanities for the purpose of doing dialect research in Arkansas. I will return to Arkansas in January, 1973, to join her in the interviewing.

With the completion of the Arkansas Language Survey, dialect research in Arkansas will be far from completed. The evidence from this investigation may warrant a more detailed geographic study, and local investigations of relic areas and urban centers are imperative. A state-wide lexical survey is a distinct possibility. Certainly, what we learn from black speakers will be the impetus for more exhaustive studies of the language of this important minority group in the state.

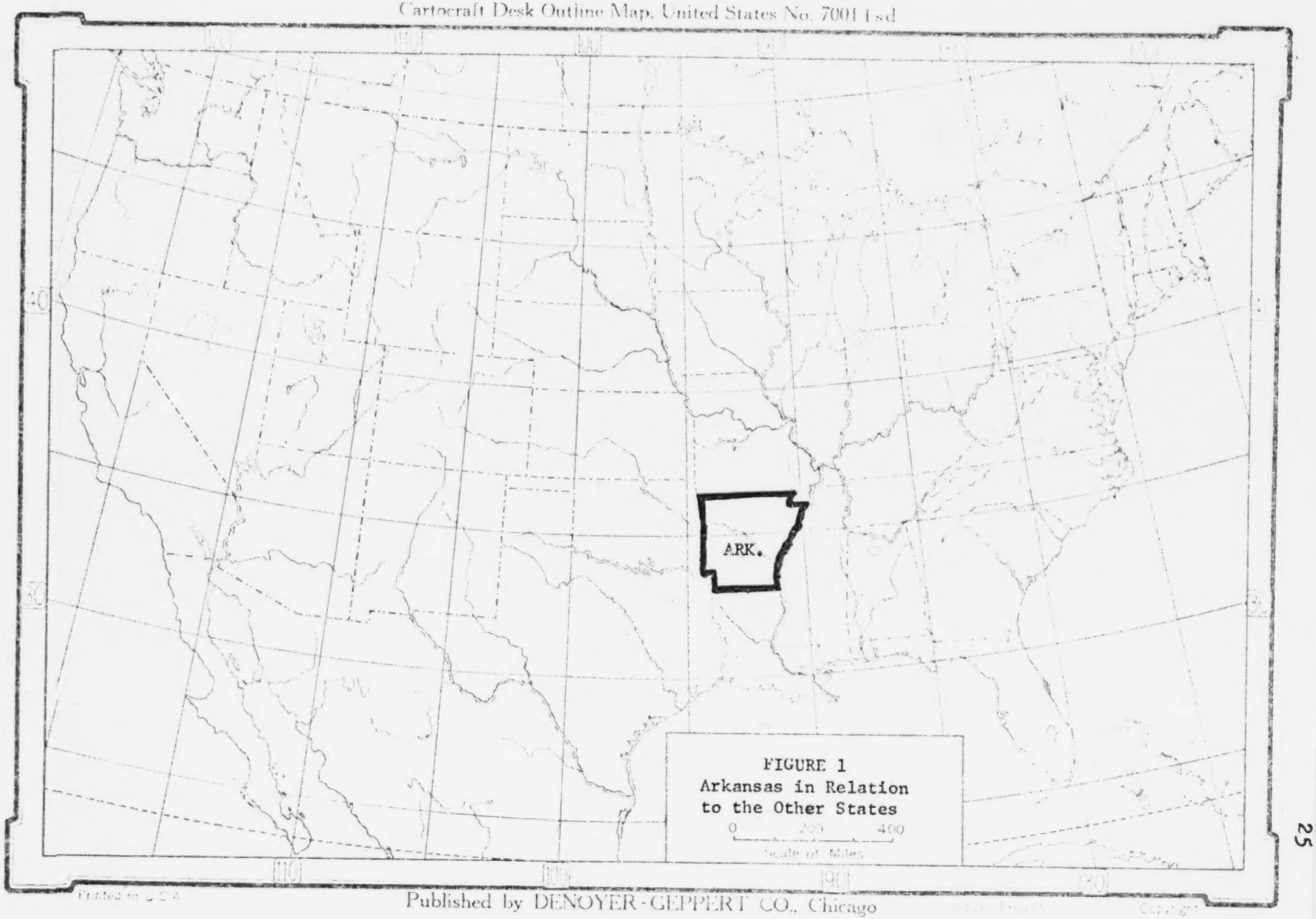
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FIGURE 1
Arkansas in Relation
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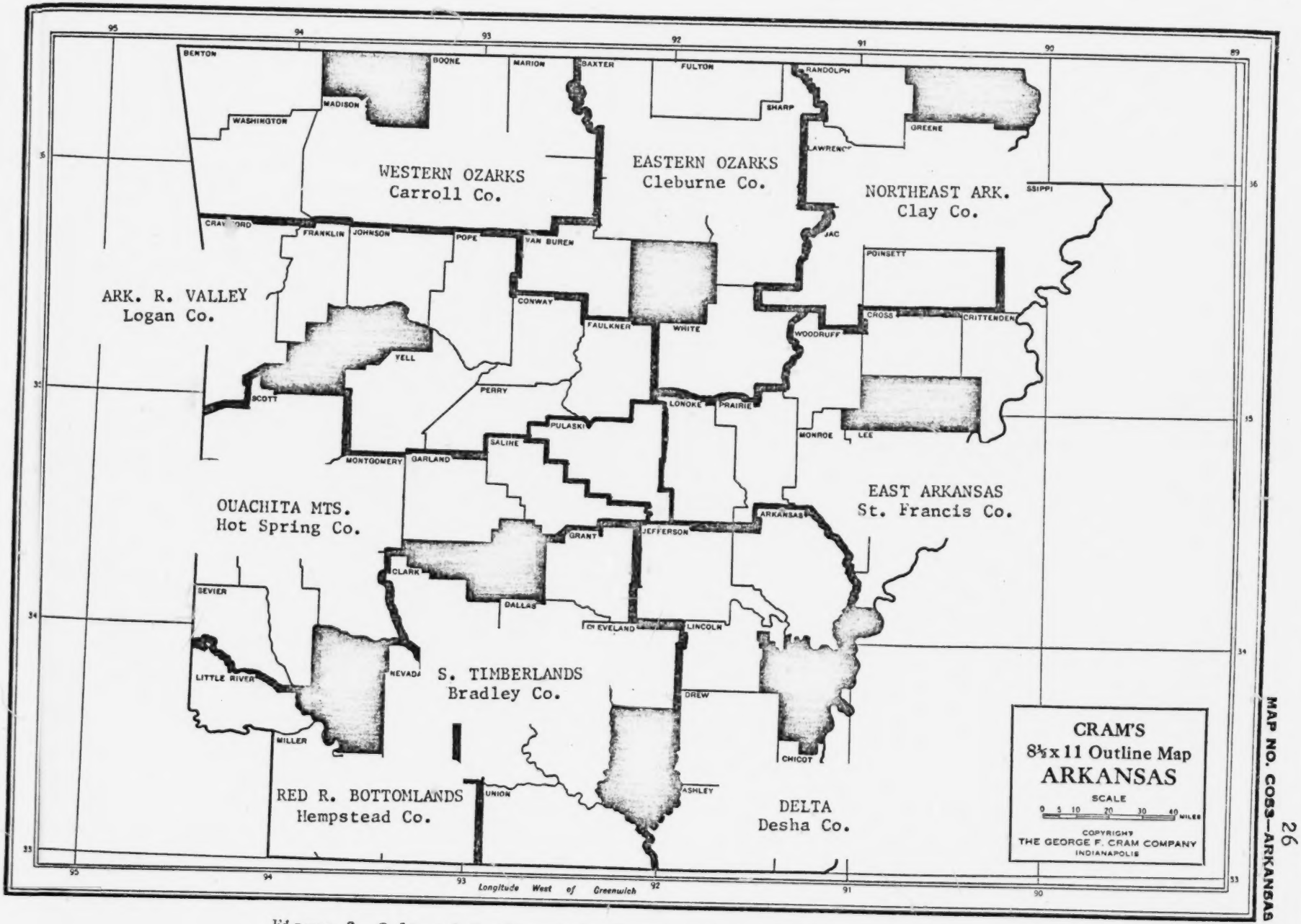

Figure 2. Cultural Regions and Representative Counties in Arkansas

NOTES

[1] To appear in Orbis.

[2] Census data are taken from the Arkansas gazette, January 30, 1971, and The Arkansas almanac.

[3] Five counties (Carroll, Clay, Cleburne, Hempstead, and Hot Spring) have public schools only, but in the other counties the total school population also includes students in parochial schools and private academies. Parochial schools are found in St. Francis and Logan counties (in Logan County Catholics of German descent are numerous). Children attending private academies created after "unification" of previously segregated public schools in St. Francis, Bradley, and Desha are also included in the total.

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